

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

1. An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with applicant's attorney Mr. Edward W. Tracy, Jr. on 06/12/2008.

The application was amended as follows to place the application in condition for allowance:

Claims 23-24 were cancelled.

Claim 21 was amended as follows:

After the end of first line of subparagraph (v), the phrases - - wherein said first and fifth cushioning assemblies each include: at least one cushioning element; and a stiffening spring at least partially surrounding said at least one cushioning element, wherein said stiffening spring has a stiffness greater than said at least one cushioning element; said stiffening spring includes a curved top disposed above said at least one cushioning element and a substantially flat bottom disposed below said at least one cushioning element;

wherein said first and fifth cushioning assemblies have a substantially similar stiffness; and - -

2. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to JILA M. MOHANDESI whose telephone number is

(571)272-4558. The examiner can normally be reached on MONDAY-FRIDAY 7:30-4:00.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Mickey YU can be reached on 571-272-4562. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/JILA M MOHANDESI/
Primary Examiner, Art Unit 3728

JMM
June 14, 2008